

# Student Handout

## Medical Rights and Tissue Ownership

Name :

Date :

### Notes:

Read the following article before coming to class:

Charo, R. A. (2006). Body of research—ownership and use of human tissue. *New England journal of medicine*, 355(15), 1517-1519.

**As you are reading, consider the following questions. I recommend you write down your thoughts to the right, in the notes section. We will be holding a debate in class based on your stance on the ownership of human tissues. You will be asked to pick a side, and defend it as a group. Having well prepared notes with organized thoughts will be helpful while forming your argument.**

**When answering the questions, think about your view as well as how someone with an alternative view would argue your point. Make sure that you are prepared to address rebuttals from your classmates. While you are thinking, pretend that I have a viewpoint that is opposite of yours. Convince me!**

1. Do you believe that individuals should hold the ownership rights of tissues that are extracted from their bodies?
2. How does this change based on the circumstance in which the tissues were taken?
  - a. Consider the use of informed consent
  - b. Severity of procedure (biopsy of cancerous mass vs. Tonsil removal)
3. Should people be compensated for their contributions and tissue extractions when used to advance science?
  - a. If yes, why and how should they be compensated?
  - b. If no, what are your reasons?
4. Consider alternative circumstances. For example, you can freeze a child's umbilical cord for possible use in the future. Who owns that tissue and can decide how to use it: the parents, the child, or the physicians/researchers? What about in the case of sperm and egg storage? What about embryonic tissues implanted within a maternal source or following possible extraction? Who owns those tissues?
5. You can choose to be an organ donor at the time of receiving your driver's license. At that time, you are likely not a legal adult. Do you own your organs at this point? How is this similar or different from your view on number four.
6. Should families be compensated in circumstances in which tissues are extracted or donated following the death of a loved one in place of compensation to the patient?
7. How do you address the need for donor anonymity and protection?
8. Overall consider your views on ownership, compensation, the limits of compensation (who receives it, how much, and in what form). Defend your reasoning.